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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 41st MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. DÉKÁNY (Vice-Chairman)	(Hungary)
later:	Mr. KRENKEL (Chairman)	(Austria)

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In the absence of Mr. Krenkel (Austria), Mr. Dékány (Hungary), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 96: REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, QUESTIONS RELATING TO REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS (continued) (A/47/131, 178, 280, 296, A/47/351-S/24357, A/47/364, 365, 391, 564, 569 and A/47/638-S/24772)

(a) REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (continued) (A/47/12 and Add.1)

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(c) HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS (continued) (A/47/352, A/47/420-S/24519, A/47/455-S/24571 and A/47/540)

1. Mr. SERGIWA (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that concerted international action was needed to find durable solutions to the worsening refugee situation world wide. His country appreciated the international response to the plight of refugees, particularly by African countries, which were the least equipped to cope with such huge influxes. None the less, he stressed the need to strengthen the ability of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to provide rapid emergency relief and implement preventive measures as the situation demanded, and supported its efforts in that direction. It was also imperative to adhere to the guiding principles on humanitarian assistance contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 46/182 concerning impartiality, the sovereignty of host countries and non-interference in their internal affairs.

2. He commended UNHCR's work to protect refugees and its successes in Africa, South-East Asia and Latin America in the field of voluntary repatriation and social reintegration, which offered the best durable solution. The prime objective, however, was to eliminate the root causes. Reflecting its solidarity with the international community in confronting the crisis, his country had hosted large numbers of new African refugees during the latter half of 1991. In April 1992, it had also provided financial assistance to refugee children in southern Sudan and neighbouring States and had sent medical convoys to various African countries, details of which were contained in document A/47/529.

3. Mr. Krenkel (Austria), Chairman, took the Chair.

4. Mrs. BENNANI (Morocco) said that many African countries, which were most affected by the alarming developments in the refugee situation, had humanely welcomed new influxes, despite their inadequate resources. Increased

(Mrs. Bennani, Morocco)

cooperation with the richest countries would undoubtedly help them to cope, although political stability and sustained economic growth were the key answers. The protection of refugees also implied respect for human rights, since it was minorities and the most vulnerable members of society who suffered most in such situations. Her delegation therefore welcomed the appointment of a Senior Coordinator responsible for implementing policy on refugee children. It also commended UNHCR on the results achieved through its three-point strategy and supported the recommendations on international protection contained in document A/47/12 and Add.1, which constituted a new approach. Prevention, which aimed to preclude mass exoduses and eliminate their causes, required UNHCR's direct involvement in situations of crisis or open conflict, such as in the former Yugoslavia.

5. As an active member of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, her delegation had always stressed the importance of durable solutions, notably voluntary repatriation, which demanded cooperation between UNHCR, the countries of origin and the international community. It commended the Governments involved for their part in the success of various repatriation operations throughout the world.

6. Her delegation regretted that UNHCR had failed to take stock of the numbers of Saharan refugees in Algerian camps with a view to implementing the fundamental principle of voluntary repatriation. Instead, it had merely evaluated their needs, thus perpetuating their situation. She stressed that Saharan returnees, who had fled the camps in recent years, at great risk to their lives, in order to live in freedom and dignity among their own people, enjoyed the same political, economic and social rights as all other Moroccans. Those still detained against their will in such camps, however, were deprived of their fundamental rights and freedoms, particularly freedom of movement. In that connection, her delegation especially appreciated the High Commissioner's comments to the effect that, in the absence of political solutions, refugees should neither be held hostage nor victim to political opportunism. In conclusion, she welcomed the enhanced cooperation between the United Nations specialized agencies and other international organizations working with refugees, and hoped that the international community would continue to help UNHCR in its daunting task.

7. Mr. REZVANI (Iran, Islamic Republic of), citing the main reasons for which people left their homelands in search of better lives, said that the new influxes of refugees suggested a hitherto inadequate approach to the problem. In that respect, he emphasized respect for human dignity and international socio-economic cooperation. His Government, which accorded high priority to the voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees, planned to establish UNHCR urban and transit camps to facilitate the process. It had also signed a memorandum of understanding with Afghanistan and UNHCR in order to establish a regular repatriation procedure. However, the aim of returning half a million refugees by the end of 1992 hinged on a generous international response, in which connection he thanked Japan for its commendable contribution and looked

(Mr. Rezvani, Iran, Islamic Republic of)

forward to supplementary support for its own assistance programmes. Notwithstanding the diminishing number of refugees in his country, international assistance had been criticized as being unfairly disproportionate to requirement, covering at best only 25 per cent of the country's efforts.

8. His country strongly believed that a durable solution to the brutal "ethnic cleansing" of Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina was linked to the suppression of Serbian aggression through mechanisms provided under the United Nations Charter. It appreciated the humanitarian assistance already provided and looked forward to measures which addressed the root causes.

9. Expressing concern that the Islamic Republic of Iran would be compelled to host new flows of refugees, he said that UNHCR activities merited even more serious attention and a more comprehensive approach which would enable the Office to make the best use of its resources for aiding current refugees. His country, given its experience in initiating preventive measures, was ready to cooperate with UNHCR and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to avert new influxes.

10. He outlined the fruitful results of cooperation between his country and non-governmental organizations during the Persian Gulf crisis, recently culminating in the organization of a seminar and the establishment of a special unit serving as a focal point for coordinating refugee and development activities undertaken by non-governmental organizations. Lastly, he emphasized the need to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations system to respond to emergency situations, in which context his country was ready to share its experience of natural and man-made disasters in addressing the root causes of refugee movements.

11. Mr. SAHRAOUI (Algeria), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Morocco's concern for human rights would be more appropriately directed towards those facing internationally recognized situations of denials of human rights. Morocco's allegations that the Saharan population was being held captive, which were by no means new, defied both common sense and the evidence that whole sectors of that population, including women, children and elderly people, had been compelled to flee their homes in search of asylum.

12. The appeal to UNHCR to take action to ensure that the Saharan population could exercise its free will to return to Western Sahara disregarded two important factors. The first was the mandate of UNHCR, which did not permit it to act as a substitute for, or to contravene, the United Nations settlement plan involving the organization of a referendum on self-determination. The second was the accepted principle that repatriation should not occur where returnees faced a situation of conflict and a further risk of being subjected to the human rights violations that had caused them to flee. As long as the conflict in Western Sahara was not settled, Algeria understood the wish of the Saharan population not to take the risk of returning home.

13. Mr. BENJELLOUN-TOUIMI (Morocco), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation had been surprised by Algeria's statement made in exercise of the right of reply. He wished, therefore, to clarify that in making its statement under item 96, his delegation's goal had been to emphasize the dramatic situation of the Saharan refugees. Its sole intention had been to draw the attention of UNHCR to the principle of voluntary repatriation, in the framework of international guarantees of security, and to request that Algeria should assist UNHCR in that process, in which his Government would be glad to cooperate.

14. Mr. SAHRAOUI (Algeria), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that, as confirmed in United Nations documents, Algeria had made a substantial contribution in kind to repatriation operations. It had also been reported, however, that repatriation activities had been delayed because of difficulties connected with the referendum in Western Sahara. There should be no misunderstanding: his country was making its contribution and had been concerned from the start of the conflict about the plight of the Saharan refugees in Algeria.

15. Mr. JESSEN-PETERSEN (Director, Division of External Relations, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), thanking Committee members for the support expressed for the work of UNHCR in the course of the discussion, said that their many useful comments and suggestions would be carefully examined and would help UNHCR to pursue its dialogue with Member States and to refine its future strategy.

16. UNHCR shared the general concern over the deteriorating refugee situation and agreed with the comments in favour of voluntary repatriation as the preferred durable solution and of the need for greater attention to be given to the broader aspect of the economic development of the returnee and host communities. The Office appreciated the expressions of support for the High Commissioner's strategy of prevention, preparedness and solutions. It pledged to continue its efforts to implement the UNHCR Guidelines on Protection of Refugee Women and Children.

17. As had been requested, the High Commissioner intended to continue to coordinate work on behalf of refugees, returnees and displaced persons, while recognizing the need for cooperation and respect for specific agency mandates.

18. On the subject of the questions and comments about the continuing relevance of UNHCR's role in changing refugee situations and the need for flexible approaches, the Office intended to continue to exercise its traditional role, but also to adapt it in the light of new developments; the Office would continue to play its part in country-of-origin solutions, temporary and in-country protection, cross-border operations and related aspects of UNHCR's unique mandate of providing international protection to refugees.

(Mr. Jessen-Petersen)

19. The announcement earlier that day of voluntary contributions by more than 25 countries totalling over $140 million was a further indication of Member States' continued and most welcome support.

Draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.27

20. Mr. SUAZO (Honduras), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.27 concerning the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA) on behalf of the members of the Follow-Up Committee of the Conference and the sponsors, summed up the contents of the draft resolution which, inter alia, noted the achievements of the CIREFCA follow-up process over the previous year. He hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.34

21. Ms. LUND (Norway) introduced draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.34 on the continuation of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on behalf of the sponsors, which had been joined by Australia, Bangladesh, China, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Germany, Nicaragua, Panama, Philippines, Poland and Rwanda. In view of the support expressed for the work of UNHCR and the increasing complexity and universality of refugee problems, continuation of the Office was a first, indispensable step towards implementation of the unique humanitarian mandate of the Office. The sponsors hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

Draft decision A/C.3/47/L.35

22. The CHAIRMAN introduced draft decision A/C.3/47/L.35, on war prisoners and persons missing as a result of war in Afghanistan, submitted by the Chairman of the Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 95: NARCOTIC DRUGS (continued) (A/C.3/47/L.28-33)

Draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.28

23. Mrs. DA SILVA (Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, which had been joined by the Philippines, introduced draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.28 on the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

Draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.29

24. Mr. FERNANDEZ (Cuba), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, introduced draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.29 on respect for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law in the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking, and expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.30

25. Ms. ARIAS (Colombia), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, which had been joined by Austria, France, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United Kingdom, introduced the draft resolution on the examination of the status of international cooperation against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances. The initiative to submit the draft resolution had originally come from Mexico and Colombia. Its purpose was to enable Member States to review experience gained in the fight against drug abuse and trafficking since the adoption of multilateral instruments in that field, as well as the participation and cooperation of United Nations organizations and bodies, now coordinated by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme.

26. The draft resolution proposed that the evaluation of the status of international cooperation should take place in the course of four high-level plenary meetings at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, in order to give fresh impetus to the international community's commitment and action to combat the drug problem. Since wide-ranging consultations had been held prior to the submission of the draft resolution, she hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.31

27. Mr. KUEHL (United States of America), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, which had been joined by Australia, Belgium, Iceland, Luxembourg and Thailand, introduced draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.31 on implementation of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control and the Global Programme of Action. He noted that the adverse impact of illicit drugs was so great that the international community must address the situation on all levels and by all appropriate means. While the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNIDCP) played a key role in coordinating the drug-control effort in the United Nations system, every agency involved should include a drug-control dimension in its activities.

28. The draft resolution called for the updating of the Action Plan for consideration by United Nations bodies in 1993. United Nations agencies associated with the Plan were called on to develop agency-specific plans for inclusion in the revised Action Plan. Those agencies could do their part to address drug issues by including the Action Plan in the agendas of their governing bodies. Member States, for their part, must remain committed to the Global Programme of Action and take steps nationally and bilaterally to cooperate in that regard. Governments should insist that United Nations agencies working in their countries must take into account the effect of illicit drugs on their national life and must lend their support through various United Nations agencies in order to ensure that the resolution had an impact.

Draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.32

29. Mrs. AGUILERA (Mexico), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, which had been joined by Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Philippines, Portugal, Sweden, Thailand and Turkey, introduced draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.32, on the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. The main objective of the draft was to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of UNIDCP by ensuring that its administrative and organizational structure was completed. The draft reaffirmed the importance of the role of UNIDCP as the main focus for concerted international action for drug-abuse control within the U ited Nations system. It was hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

Draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.33

30. Mr. ORTIZ (Bolivia), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, which had been joined by Azerbaijan, Cameroon, Cyprus, Ghana, Grenada, the Philippines and Vanuatu, introduced draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.33, on international action to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking. Faced with the magnitude of the drug problem, the international community had no choice but to step up anti-drug efforts at all levels, based on a comprehensive approach.

31. In part I, the draft resolution condemned drug trafficking and urged continued international action, through shared responsibility and with full respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and cultural identity of States. It stressed the importance of achieving the objectives of the Decade and requested UNIDCP to study the involvement of children in drug-related criminal activities. UNIDCP was further requested, inter alia, to analyse world-wide trends in illicit trafficking. The draft resolution also appealed to States and donors to increase voluntary contributions to the Fund of UNIDCP.

32. Part II called upon States to implement the Global Programme of Action, and upon the United Nations system and relevant non-governmental organizations to cooperate with States in that regard. It was hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 93: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (continued)

(b) CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (continued) (A/C.3/47/L.16 and L.26)

33. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.16, entitled "United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders". The related programme budget implications were contained in document A/C.3/47/L.26.

34. A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.16.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

35. Draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.16 was adopted by 97 votes to 1, with 41 abstentions.

36. Mr. IRUMBA (Uganda) expressed appreciation to the countries that had voted in favour of the draft resolution and hoped that those that had voted against or had abstained would continue to support the Institute in order to enable it to carry out its mandate. The statement submitted by the Secretary-General on the programme budget implications was rather misleading because under General Assembly resolution 46/153 the appropriations for the Institute were to cover the whole biennium. The statement fell far short of expectations with regard to available funds for 1993. The programme budget implications seemed to be based on the assumption that there was a balance which would be sufficient to finance the Institute in 1993. His delegation would seek a further clarification from the Secretary-General when the revised appropriations for the current biennium were discussed in the Fifth Committee. According to document A/47/379/Corr.1, the United Nations grant

(Mr. Irumba, Uganda)

amounting to $90,000 had been deleted from the proposed programme budget for 1993 in annex VII of the report of the Secretary-General on the African Institute (A/47/379). His delegation expected to receive further information on projections concerning the proposed programme budget for 1993.

37. Mr. JAAFARI (Syrian Arab Republic), Mrs. KING-ROUSSEAU (Trinidad and Tobago) and Mr. AL-DOUSARI (Qatar) said that, if they had been present for the vote on draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.16, they would have voted in favour.

38. Ms. TERANISHI (Japan), speaking in explanation of vote, said that she had abstained because regional institutes such as the one referred to in the draft resolution under consideration should be financed through voluntary contributions rather than the regular budget. Furthermore, her delegation had difficulty understanding parts of the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/379 and Corr.1). Although several senior posts in the African Institute were still vacant, those posts and the activities of the Institute continued to be budgeted. While the statement submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/C.3/47/L.26 partly clarified why that had happened, Japan felt that the discrepancy in question should be corrected as soon as possible.

AGENDA ITEM 97: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS (continued)

(b) HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS (continued) (A/47/544; A/C.3/47/L.20/Rev.1 and L.25)

39. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to turn its attention to draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.20/Rev.1, on the report of the Secretary-General concerning a request to the United Nations to observe the referendum process in Eritrea. The programme budget implications were contained in document A/C.3/47/L.25.

40. Mr. BRITO (Brazil) said that the Secretary-General's report (A/47/544) involved questions that went beyond the Committee's sphere of competence. It was essential therefore that action by the Committee should be based on reliable information and considered deliberation.

41. In view of its past performance in the field of electoral assistance, the United Nations appeared to be effective in helping local authorities to organize elections and to ensure appropriate standards of fairness and freedom. Three main reasons led his delegation to endorse the draft resolution under consideration. First, his country wished to help resolve the problems in that region of Africa through a democratic and peaceful process, which responded to the will of the people and laid the groundwork for economic and social development. Secondly, the Secretary-General appeared to be fully satisfied that all the parties concerned were in favour of the referendum and the manner in which it would be held. Thirdly, members of the African Group,

(Mr. Brito, Brazil)

whose views merited special attention, had endorsed the Secretary-General's recommendations regarding the establishment of a United Nations observer mission.

42. The Secretary-General's report concerning the establishment of a United Nations Observer Mission to Verify the Referendum in Eritrea (UNOVER) (A/47/544), included a number of proposals which might have a bearing on future activities in the field of electoral assistance. In that connection, he wished to draw attention to the proposed composition and personnel structure of the observer mission. According to the report, international observers would be recruited from selected non-governmental organizations in Eritrea and neighbouring countries. While it understood the arguments in favour of recruiting local personnel, his delegation did not believe that limiting recruitment to NGO staff was warranted on either technical or political grounds. NGO membership did not, in itself, guarantee that the individual in question had the necessary expertise to participate in the mission.

43. The report had also referred to "volunteers" in connection with personnel costs for both travel and subsistence payments; it would be appropriate to state exactly who those volunteers would be. The use of the expression "observers from Member States" should also be clarified; it was his assumption that the difference between such observers and other members of the mission was simply a matter of costs to be incurred. In that same connection, it was not clear why observers from Member States would be chosen only from the European and North American States; other regions, Africa in particular, would be equally entitled to participate.

44. Draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.20/Rev.1 was adopted.

45. Ms. MANIMEKALAI (India), speaking in explanation of her Government's position on draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.20/Rev.1, said that her delegation had joined the consensus in view of the fact that the request for a United Nations observer mission had come from the Government of Ethiopia and that observers from African States would be involved. Her delegation was, however, concerned about the safety and security of mission personnel because of indications that support for United Nations involvement was not unanimous.

46. With regard to financing, it was the understanding of her delegation that the observer mission would be funded entirely through voluntary contributions.

47. Mr. TROTTIER (Canada) said that his Government strongly supported the proposed observer mission. However, it believed that United Nations electoral assistance should be considered an expense of the Organization under Article 17, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations. In view of the importance of the mission, the United Nations would not be adequately served if the financing was left entirely to voluntary contributions.

48. Mr. SCHUTTE (Germany) said that his Government was convinced of the paramount importance of the referendum and welcomed United Nations involvement. His Government wished to reiterate its view that United Nations activities in the electoral field should be financed through the regular budget. His delegation therefore reserved the right to take up the issue of UNOVER financing at the time of its consideration by the Fifth Committee.

49. Ms. FOSTIER (Belgium) said that her delegation endorsed the efforts of the Secretary-General to assist countries in carrying out free and fair elections, which helped ensure political pluralism, democracy and human rights. Her country thus supported the establishment of UNOVER. It believed that, in principle, such an operation should be financed through the regular budget. However, given the urgency of the situation in Eritrea, it would endorse, as an exception, financing through voluntary contributions.

50. Mr. LAPOUGE (France) said that his Government fully endorsed the establishment of UNOVER and welcomed the adoption of draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.20/Rev.1. It did not, however, agree with the proposed financing modalities set forth in document A/C.3/47/L.25. Activities related to peace-keeping or human rights, including electoral assistance operations, should, in principle, be financed through the regular budget. Prolonged dependence on voluntary contributions could undermine certain operations and encourage situations in which financing was determined by donor-country preference.

51. UNOVER should include technical assistance, which could be coordinated by the United Nations Development Programme.

52. Mr. BABADOUDOU (Benin) said that his country had joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.20/Rev.1. However, establishment of the mission did not imply any violation of the principle of the inviolability of territorial boundaries, enshrined in the Charter of the Organization of African Unity.

53. Mr. KUEHL (United States of America) said that he wished to thank the Chairman for facilitating the adoption of the resolution, which his delegation had strongly supported. His Government continued to believe that electoral assistance should be financed by means of voluntary contributions and hoped to make its own contribution.

54. Mr. YUAN Shoucheng (China) said that in accordance with its Charter, the United Nations was not mandated to assist in the internal electoral affairs of States. Nevertheless, his Government had no objection to United Nations involvement in an electoral process as long as the parties involved had so requested. It had, therefore, joined the consensus on the draft resolution.

55. He wished, however, to point out an inconsistency in the texts relating to electoral assistance. Paragraph 3 of document A/47/544 and paragraph 2 of document A/C.3/47/L.25 referred to the Electoral Assistance Unit of the

(Mr. Yuan Shoucheng, China)

Department of Political Affairs. However, in General Assembly resolution 46/137, reference was made only to a focal point; there was no specific mention of such a unit.

56. It was indicated in paragraph 2 of document A/C.3/47/L.25 that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/137, resources had been made available for an Electoral Assistance Unit to begin functioning, and that subprogramme 4, relating to electoral assistance, had been "incorporated in the revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, recommended by the Committee for Programme and Coordination for adoption by the General Assembly at its current session". That was, however, inaccurate: the fact was that, at its session in September 1992, that Committee had been unable to reach agreement on subprogramme 4.

57. Ms. TERANISHI (Japan) said she wished to reiterate her delegation's basic position that United Nations electoral assistance activities should be financed through extrabudgetary funds. Her delegation reserved the right to consider the matter in greater detail when the financing of UNOVER was considered by the Fifth Committee.

58. Mr. BIGGAR (Ireland) said that his delegation fully supported the establishment of UNOVER and welcomed the adoption of draft resolution A/C.3/47/L.20/Rev.1. Throughout its consideration of that matter, his delegation's primary concern had been to ensure the safety and security of the observer mission staff. It therefore understood the expression "authorities directly concerned", contained in paragraph 4 of resolution A/C.3/47/L.20/Rev.1, to refer to the de facto authorities in Eritrea and the transitional Government of Ethiopia. It also understood the expression "fullest cooperation", in that same paragraph, to include the duty to provide adequate protection to the members of the mission.

59. His delegation held the view that electoral assistance activities should be funded through the United Nations regular budget.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.